



Hourglass

Safer ageing · Stopping abuse
Northern Ireland

Keeping you and your loved ones safe from

FINANCIAL ABUSE



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**We are
Hourglass
the only UK-
wide charity
that's calling
time on the
harm, abuse and
exploitation of
older people**



Keeping You and Your Loved Ones Safe from Financial Abuse



Financial abuse can take many forms, it can be subtle and hard to spot. If you or an older person you know are experiencing this you are not alone, sadly this type of abuse can affect anyone, regardless of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability or gender identity.

Hourglass is here to help. This guide provides you with information about what financial abuse is, how to identify it when it is happening and some tips on how to protect yourself.

What is Financial Abuse?



Financial abuse is another name for stealing money or possessions, or defrauding someone by threatening or pressuring them to hand over money, or sign financial documents. Financial abuse can restrict freedom and choice and can often happen alongside other types of abuse.

Financial abuse may be obvious or you may feel that something is not right, for example, a family member or care worker taking money from your purse or wallet without your permission, or pressuring you to give them money. At other times it may be more difficult to notice, for example, small amounts of money being taken from your account each month. When this abuse is perpetrated by someone you know it can be hard to address. However, financial abuse is a crime and you can get help and support.

Financial Abuse Includes:

- Theft or robbery of money or property.
- Being overcharged for work on your property by rogue traders.
- Someone not allowing you control over your own money.
- Someone building up debt in your name.
- Being forced to pay for other people's goods.
- Someone accessing your financial accounts without your permission.
- Someone manipulating or pressuring you into signing over property.
- Being pressurised or manipulated into changing your will or Power of Attorney.

Possible indicators of Financial Abuse:

- Signatures on official documents, for example cheques, that do not resemble the older person's own.
- Sudden changes in bank accounts, including unexplained withdrawals of large sums of money.
- The unexplained inclusion of additional names on an older person's bank account.
- Sudden and unexplained transfers of assets to a family member or someone outside the family.
- Numerous unpaid bills.
- Unusual concern from any individual that an excessive amount of money is being expended on the care of an older person.
- The abrupt changes to, or the sudden establishment of, wills.
- The sudden appearance of previously uninvolved relatives claiming rights to an older person's affairs or possessions.



You may be feeling:

- Ashamed, embarrassed, isolated or trapped.
- That you do not want to upset or get family members in ‘trouble’.
- You may prefer to live with the abuser than alone.
- Fearful of losing relationships with other family members e.g. grandchildren.
- Unsure how to get help or who to talk to.
- Afraid to get help or worried about being believed.
- Worried that you don’t want the person hurting you to get into trouble, you just want the abuse to stop.
- Hopeless, if you have experienced a negative response from agencies before when reporting the abuse.

Tips and advice for you:

- If other people do your shopping, keep an eye on receipts and what is spent.
- Only let people you trust have access to your accounts, money or any benefits or pensions.
- Be aware of phone and internet scams- do not send money or information before confirming identities.
- If people you do not trust are coming to the door remember you do not have to answer. Consider getting an intercom or peephole installed for safety.
- Always do your research when employing people for household jobs or repairs. Make sure you obtain a few quotes and use reputable companies. If someone is pressuring you this may be a cause for concern. You are entitled to say ‘no’ and close the door. If you are worried call 101, if they become aggressive or inappropriate call 999.
- Check your bank statements regularly.
- Ensure you choose secure passwords for online banking that only you know and if you need to write them down keep them in a safe place.
- Keep important documents and valuables safe and out of sight.
- Think about who you might want to make decisions on your behalf if you lose capacity to do so, and consider giving someone you trust Power of Attorney.
- Always seek professional advice when considering Power of Attorney.

Tips and advice if you are concerned about someone else:

- Stay calm if an older person tells you they are being abused.
- Be sensitive to the emotional impact of disclosing abuse.
- Contact Hourglass for further advice and support.
- Provide Hourglass' contact details to the person you are worried about, if it is safe to do so.

How we can support you:

At Hourglass we are dedicated to stopping the harm, abuse and exploitation of older people. Our helpline and online services are available across the UK and our expert team provide information, advice and support and can put you in touch with appropriate local agencies that may provide additional services.

We are here for you Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm, offering:

- Support for any older person experiencing or at risk of abuse or exploitation.
- Support if you are unsure if abuse or exploitation is happening to you or someone else.
- Support for anyone with concerns about an older person, e.g. family, friends, neighbours, paid carers or professionals, etc.
- Information and advice relating to safer ageing and prevention.



All our contact details can be found on the back of this brochure.



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You can contact us in many ways:

24/7 Helpline: 0808 808 8141

Our helpline is entirely confidential and free to call from a landline or mobile, and the number will not appear on your phone bill.

Text message: 07860 052906

Texts from outside the UK will be charged at their standard international rate which will differ depending on location and service charges of your phone provider. The number will appear on your bill and in your phone records but will not be identified as Hourglass.

INSTANT MESSAGING service: www.wearehourglass.org

Get information from our CHATBOT - www.wearehourglass.org

Get information from our KNOWLEDGE BANK - knowledgebank.wearehourglass.org

Email: helpline@wearehourglass.org

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